



HM Courts &
Tribunals Service

Juror Charter

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The Juror Charter sets out the minimum standards that you, as a juror, can expect from HM Courts & Tribunals Service at each stage of your jury service, from receiving your jury summons to completion of this important public duty

Summoning

The Jury Central Summoning Bureau (JCSB), which is part of HM Courts & Tribunals Service are responsible for issuing and processing the jury summonses issued for all Crown Courts in England and Wales.

When summoned you can expect:

- to have been chosen at random from the electoral register (the electoral registers are lists provided by every local authority of everyone who has registered themselves as eligible to vote) to serve as a juror in the Crown Court, the county court or the coroner's court. If you serve as a juror at either the coroner's or county court, you will be provided with separate information. This Charter only covers jury service in the Crown Court.
- to receive a jury summons at least four weeks prior to serving and you will receive:
 - the leaflet called 'Guide to Jury Summons' which will tell you how to complete the reply to summons
 - an allowances leaflet explaining the rates of allowances that you can claim
 - a pre paid envelope to return your reply to your jury summons.

The information will tell you:

- which court and the date you are expected to attend
- contact details for the JCSB for returning the reply to the summons and to deal with any queries
- how to complete the reply to your summons
- information on how to apply to have your jury service deferred, or to be excused from jury service.

You are expected to reply to your summons within seven days of receiving it. Once you have replied you can expect to receive one of the following standard reply letters within ten days of returning your completed acknowledgement:

If you are going to serve you can expect to receive:

- A confirmation of service letter with:
 - a booklet called 'Your Guide to Jury Service' helping you to prepare for jury service
 - a second allowances leaflet explaining the allowances you can claim
 - a local information leaflet with a map of how to get to court, the times the court is open, details of public transport and any car parks near the court as well as the facilities available at the court such as refreshments, telephones etc.

Warning: Section 20 of the Juries Act 1974 provides that where a person summoned fails to attend on their first day or any subsequent date they may be liable to a fine of up to £1,000 unless that person can show reasonable cause for their failure to comply with the summons.

If you have any special needs or a disability

The court can make special arrangements as far as it is practicable and where necessary a visit to the court can be organised ahead of your jury service to discuss what arrangements can be put in place.

If you are not qualified for jury service you can expect to receive:

- A letter formally withdrawing the summons.

If you apply to be excused from jury service, you can expect to receive:

If successful:

- an excusal letter confirming that on this occasion you are excused from jury service.

If not successful:

- a refused excusal letter including details of how to appeal to the Head of the JCSB, and
- a confirmation of service letter (see 'If you are going to serve', above).

If you apply to have your jury service deferred, it should be noted that only one deferral application will be allowed by the JCSB within any 12 month period and you will be asked to provide a range of dates that you will be available to carry out jury service. If your jury service is deferred to a date other than that shown on the jury summons, you can expect to receive:

If successful:

- a deferral letter informing you of your new jury service date, and
- eight weeks before that date a confirmation of service letter.

If not successful:

- a refused deferral letter including details of how to appeal to the Head of the JCSB, and
- a confirmation of service letter repeating your jury service details.

If you appeal to the JCSB to be deferred or excused and if you are still unhappy with the decision by the Head of the JCSB then your appeal will be placed before the Senior Judge at the Crown Court, if you request so. You may be asked to attend the court to make your representations by way of an oral application to the Senior Judge.

All enquiries about your jury service should be made to the JCSB up until one week before your date of service. During the last week before your service your details will be transferred to the court at which you are due to serve and any enquiries thereafter should be made directly to the court (contact details of which will be shown on the local information leaflet you received with your confirmation of service letter).

Your First Day as a Juror

You will be required to attend the court at 9am:

Upon arrival

You can expect:

- to pass through a security archway including a search of any bags you may have
- to be greeted by court staff
- to have your summons and identification checked by court staff
- to be shown to a separate juror waiting area.

In the Jury Waiting Area

You can expect:

- to be shown the 'Your Role as a Juror' DVD giving you more details about your jury service
- to be given a talk by the jury manager or jury officer about your role as a juror
- to be made aware of the court facilities available, including prayer/faith rooms and any catering arrangements.

Whilst you are waiting

Courts will do all they can not to keep you waiting too long, however, some delays are unavoidable.

Whilst waiting you can expect:

- to be provided with regular updates by either the jury manager or jury officer about when you are likely to be needed in court
- to be released as soon as possible if you are not needed
- to be given a phone number to call to find out if you need to come to court on subsequent days or to be provided with an explanation of how you will be able to find out when you next need to attend court.

Throughout your jury service

You can expect:

- staff to be available to answer your questions
- a telephone number in case you need to make contact with the court
- to have your right to privacy respected i.e. to be able to talk to staff in private if you prefer
- to be told how many days you are likely to sit as a juror
- to receive advice on how to claim allowances and your entitlements and be given an appropriate claims form.

You might not be needed as a juror in a trial on every day of your jury service, there may also be times whilst serving on a trial that you will not be required in the court room, there are various reasons for this.

Within the court

You can expect:

- to be escorted to and from the courtroom by a court usher.

In the court room/the trial

You can expect that:

- from the panel of 15 people called into the courtroom, 12 will be randomly selected by the court clerk to sit on the jury and if you are selected the court clerk will call out your name.

Once selected to sit as a juror on a trial

You can expect:

- to sit in the jury box with the other empanelled jurors
- to be sworn in. You must either take an oath on a holy book of your choice or affirm [promise without the holy book]
- pens/pencils and paper to be provided in the jury box
- to be able to ask questions relating to the trial by giving a note to the usher who will pass it to the judge
- to break for up to one hour for lunch usually sometime between 12pm and 2pm
- to be required to attend court on time each day (you should arrive at least 15 minutes before the listed time of the trial) and listen to the evidence until the trial is over
- to hear the evidence of the trial usually between the hours of 10am to 4.30pm. There may be occasions where the court has to sit later than this
- the judge to explain the law and summarise the facts of the case and to clarify your duties before you retire to consider your verdict
- upon the jury reaching a verdict to return to the court room where your jury foreman will return the jury's verdict to the court
- to be thanked by the trial Judge for your contribution.

Long trials

As a juror you will normally expect to sit for up to two weeks. If you are called to sit on a case that is expected to last for over two weeks you can expect:

- to be told it is a long trial and informed of its estimated duration before you are sworn in.
- to be invited to disclose any exceptional circumstances which might lead the court to decide that it would be inappropriate to require you to sit on a case of that length.

Support during jury service

- if at any time during your jury service you are approached by anyone you think may be connected to the case you are hearing you need to make immediate contact with court staff.
- if you feel threatened or concerned at any stage as a juror then you need to make immediate contact with court staff. If you are not within the court house and you think you are in immediate danger then you should dial 999.

If you are not chosen to sit on a jury panel

You can expect:

- to be able to return to the jury assembly area to join others not currently sitting on a trial
- to be eligible for random selection for another trial, if needed.

If you are not needed for another trial that day

You can expect:

- to be allowed to leave the court either to return to work or home
- to be told when you should next attend court, or advised as to how to contact the court to find out when you will next be required to attend court.

When you retire to consider your verdict

In the deliberation room you can expect:

- to have access to toilets
- to have access to cold drinking water
- to be able to take your court room notes with you if you have any
- to be provided with pencils and paper
- to be able to call an usher should you need to
- to have to choose a jury foreman who will announce the jury's verdict to the court once you have reached your decision
- to be segregated from other jurors whilst you consider your verdict
- to be able to express your opinion based on the evidence heard in court
- to have your lunch (where applicable) with your fellow trial jurors in the deliberation room.

Complaint Handling

In the event of a complaint you can expect:

- To speak to the jury manager in the first instance who will try to sort out the problem there and then
- if you are still not happy with the outcome then you can ask to speak to the customer service officer or the court manager who again will try to sort out the problem there and then
- if it is not possible because an investigation is necessary then you should receive a reply within five working days of making the complaint.
- if you make a written complaint then you should still receive a reply within five working days.
- if you are dissatisfied with the reply from the court then you can ask for the matter to be reconsidered by the Complaints Handling and Enquiries Team. You should expect to receive a full reply within 15 working days from the date your complaint was received.
- Full details of the complete complaints process are available in the leaflet 'I want to complain - what do I do?' which is available at court or on the HM Courts & Tribunals Service FormFinder (type in the leaflet number EX343) on the Directgov website at www.direct.gov.uk

End of Service

Support After Completing Jury Service

If you are upset by any of the evidence you may want to talk to someone in confidence about it.

You may wish to talk to your GP or you may find it helpful to talk to someone experienced in giving emotional support to others such as the Samaritans. Although you should not disclose your discussions with other jurors as the rules about this continue to apply and are confidential.

Full details are available in the leaflet 'Supporting you Through Jury Service' which is available at court or on the HM Courts & Tribunals Service FormFinder (type in the leaflet number 5222A) on the website at www.justice.gov.uk

Claiming Allowances

Where eligible, you may claim for:

- travelling expenses
- a subsistence allowance towards the cost of your lunch and refreshments
- an allowance for other financial loss including loss of earnings / benefits and childcare costs up to pre-determined limits.

You can expect:

- to be given a claim form on your first day of jury service
- your payments to be made within 10 working days of the court receiving a correctly completed and supported claim form, at the end of your jury service.

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